# INTERVIEW OF DR. WILLIAM HAMILTON

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| INTERVIEWEE | Dr. William Hamilton |
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| INTERVIEWERS | Tom Milroy and Linda MacFarlane |
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TOM MILROY: We are standing at Flying Cloud Farm, home of Dr. William Hamilton, also known as Will or Dr. Will. And we are going to ask him a few questions, starting with thinking back to your first day in Fairview. When was that?

DR. HAMILTON: Beginning of May 1976. Well, when I came to live here, as opposed to coming here--

TM: The first day in Fairview.

DR.H: Oh, that was July, beginning of July 1972.

TM: And then when did you move here?

DR.H: Four years later.

TM: So you've been here 32 years.

DR.H: More than that.

TM: 42 years.

DR.H: Yeah.

TM: So thinking back to that very first visit, what were your first impressions of Fairview?

DR.H: I didn't have any impressions of Fairview. I only had impressions of my in-laws and their home. I don't remember coming through Fairview. We were probably picked up at the airport. I was a little bit apprehensive as to what I'd let myself in for, seeing it was my first, and actually only, marriage, so far.

TM: So describe what happened that day, and who you met that day.

DR.H: We arrived when lunch was being served and the whole of the porch of the Clarkes' had tables and chairs and there must have been about 60 people there...

TM: Wow.

DR.H: ...eating and I realized, after I'd been here for a few weeks, that was fairly average, wasn't particularly unusual.

TM: Wow. So who were the 60 people?

DR.H: I have no idea who they all were, except for one very nice man called Adrian Nussdorfer, who I sat next to, who was enthralled at telling me about the plastic worms that he'd purchased to fish with. I remember that very well because it was kind of a relaxing conversation for me.

TM: So you were with your wife to be?

DR.H: No, my wife who had been for (March, April, May, June) about four months. We were married.

TM: Where had you got married?

DR.H: We got married in England. This is very personal.

TM: Well, let's move on to talking more about Fairview and what it was like in those days, how it has changed.

DR.H: You know, it's really difficult to extricate one's own life, to be objective about the surroundings, because I've been so involved here, since I

moved here. It's meant a lot to me. It's been my source of income, for one thing.

TM: Tell us a little bit about that.

DR.H: Well, I'm a physician. And I decided that I was going to work where I lived. And that worked out really well. People in Fairview were very kind to me, very nice. They came to me, they came back. More important.

TM: So you were like a family practitioner in Fairview?

DR.H: Yes. I went once--my father visited from England and he was a doctor. And we went to the top of one of the mountains here, above where the Clarkes live. Steep climb, but he was very fit. And we looked over, between the mountain ranges. He said it must be very interesting to be able to see the whole area where you are working.

TM: Wow. So you covered all--

DR.H: Well, where people came, you know. I mean, people came from a lot further than that. In America, people travel long ways sometimes to find a doctor.

TM: To see a good doctor.

DR.H: Well, not necessarily. Who they think is a good doctor.

TM: Where was your surgery?

DR.H: Well, at that time, when I started, I actually went--did two years in the family practice residency program in Asheville, which was one of the reasons I came here, because that was available. I got to know the local physicians. I got to understand the nuances of the American healthcare. So that was very great to have that introduction, for two years.

And then I needed a building to practice out of. And at the end of that program that I was involved in, I'd seen a few houses and places in Fairview

that might be suitable. And the program I was with had a financial advisor in the program to help with the building for a practice but also helped me. It's very important for me to understand the American healthcare, find out how it works. So I never really got it, actually.

But, anyway, so we drove through Fairview with Susie, looking at different places that I'd spotted, to practice.

TM: Can you remember any of them?

DR.H: Yes, I can remember some of them.

TM: Tell us what they were then and what they are now, those places.

DR.H: None of them--they all stayed as residences. None of them were that practical. And I had been offered a job in Bat Cave. They wanted me to go there. That was nice. It was an income. I didn't have to worry about organizing the finances. And they really wanted me down there, for some reason. It was only 8 miles from here.

The nicest place I visited, we visited, was this house that I'm standing in front of.

TM: Was it called Flying Cloud at that time?

DR.H: No, no. My daughter created that name for her farm, really. So, this isn't really Flying Cloud, actually. Her business is Flying Cloud Farm. And we haven't ever named this house, in reality. But that's something I want the children to do.

So, anyway, this place was for rent. And I thought it was very unsuitable in a way. But it was passable. And when I went down to Bat Cave, at first, I had very little to do, very few patients. And I got quite depressed, wondering where I'd ended up, wishing that I had actually gone ahead with this place.

Well, I'd been down there a few months when the practice built up a lot. In fact, I was so busy after two years that another doctor came in to help me. And that worked out, mainly because of the obstetric practice that I did.

And so, then my father-in-law, Susie's dad, showed me a letter from the family who owned this building, which had never been sold, saying they would like to sell it to the Clarke family, if anybody were interested, before they put it on the market. And I decided immediately to buy it, because we needed somewhere to live.

TM: And who were those owners and how long ago?

DR.H: They were the Lynches. It was built by Dr. Jim Lynch in 1935. And his, one of his daughters owned it but they'd never lived here, I don't think. They'd rented it out all that time.

TM: And the Lynches were a local family?

DR.H: They pretty much predominate, and still do, this valley that we're in. It's pretty much the Lynches and the Hamiltons now.

TM: So run through some of the Lynches who are here or have been here.

DR.H: Well, yes, I'll try to. The ones that--of course, the man who built this house, I only know by reputation, Dr. Jim Lynch. He inherited half of this valley from his father, and his brother inherited the other side of the road, who became a farmer. And the house is still standing over there. The Ramseys live in it, behind the pine trees. His brother who sold me -no, his brother who built this house had--I think he went to Johns Hopkins, you know, in Baltimore? And then came to settle back down here and had a practice in Asheville, where he delivered the two Cecils, boys, the two boys who inherited the Biltmore House. He just died, very recently, one of them has. One is still alive, I think.

Anyway, he delivered them. He apparently treated Mr. --no, I don't really remember who he treated. But, anyway, he had a very good reputation as a result of working with this family, and that helped his practice.

TM: Which other Lynches are still around here?

DR.H: Well, his son Ridgeway was my neighbor for many years. Wonderful man who has got two sons, three sons, who are all alive. Ridgeway was an engineer, worked for American Enka, which was a Dutch company, actually, as an engineer. During the second World War he designed the corrective mathematical measure to calculate torque on firing these shells that went many miles and then would start to spin. But it was predictable how much. So he worked that out for the American navy. And then he eventually retired here and was a wonderful neighbor for many years. My father used to love visiting him.

TM: Was it him who designed and made the sculpture, the concrete sculpture?

DR.H: Yes, a beautiful sculpture representing his marriage, called "Entwined", two concrete spirals, reinforced concrete curling up into the air.

TM: And who now lives in that house?

DR.H: Well, his son, Sandy, bought the house from the family somehow, and he worked in Hendersonville, for many years, at an Episcopal campground. And he came back to live here with his wife, Patty. And then, the other son, Bill, worked as a chemist. He was a chemist but he ran the winery at the Biltmore House for a long time. And he still lives here. He just retired and has a telescope, 18-inch telescope.

TM: In an actual observatory--

DR.H: In an observatory that he built and the telescope adjusts for tremors of the earth, small tremors, so they can take 8-minute photographs without a blur on them.

TM: So like father, like son, calculating.

DR.H: Yes. [laughing] Right. There's another boy who lives in Seattle, who was an artist and also an engineer and built theater sets all over the world: Milan and London. He did Henry VIII at Covent Garden. Tom. Yeah, Tom.

TM: Still living?

DR.H: Still living. He still lives in Seattle.

TM: There's also the vineyard. He bought his--

DR.H: Oh, Bill brought cuttings of the Biltmore Estate vines and cultivated a vineyard here.

TM: So we'll take pictures of the observatory and the vineyard. Let's talk a little bit about this house and the garden that we're standing in now, with beautiful trees around us. We'll take some photos of your trees.

DR.H: Yeah.

TM: Tell us a little bit about the history of the--

DR.H: Well, I have a, it's called architect's vellum. It's not really vellum which is animal skin. But it's what they called architect's vellum. It's some kind of fiber, which is a diagram of the anticipated gardens here, that was drawn up by Chauncey Beadle, who was the head gardener and landscape designer of the Biltmore House, subsequent to Olmsted.

TM: Ah. So he worked with him.

DR.H: Yes, he did. He worked with him for a long time and then he was there for 40 years, apparently, after that. So a lot of these trees that were on that parchment are still standing. And I'm currently trying to clear

up the debris, a lot of the scrub. Consequently, I've got quite a lot of poison ivy.

TM: Do you remember any of the--

DR.H: Yes, right behind you is a sweet gum tree. Behind that's a water oak. Beyond there are three Norwegian spruces.

TM: And these were planted by Mr. Beadle?

DR.H: I don't know. I don't know. They're on the manuscript. I can't tell you whether some of them were here before or whether they were planted. There's one maple tree left here, and I think the maples were planted. This actually was a pasture. This was a field. It wasn't built in a wood. This is part of his fields. Then there's a red oak over here and a beech tree. Beautiful beech tree over there.

So, yeah, so I don't really know. I think they--what do they call--Judas trees, there are some on the map, and there are some in reality, but they probably are several generations later. And then there's an elm tree there.

TM: Still surviving.

DR.H: Yeah. That was on the map. It's tiny. It's not really that big. American elm it's called.

TM: And then if we go down behind the house, you've got some buildings a way back, and a pond? What's the history of those?

DR.H: Yes. Well, there was a big barn right behind the house that's not there anymore, and then there's a smaller house that my daughter has lived in for 20 years, who's been a farmer here with her husband. That's actually built from--what are the trees that go straight up? [Laughing] I've forgotten everywhere.

TM: Some kind of fir tree?

DR.H: No, no, no, no. Not fir trees. Poplars.

TM: Oh, poplar. Right.

DR.H: It's built from poplar wood.

TM: So the sidings on that house.

DR.H: They're logs.

TM: Poplar logs.

DR.H: And then my house is built from oak, which were felled on the other side of the valley, up towards the ridge, over there.

TM: Do you have the plans for this house?

DR.H: I've got blueprints.

TM: Could we scan those in today, for the record?

DR.H: Yeah, you can try. You're welcome to try.

TM: Okay. Well, tell us a little bit about the history of the farm and what it was before your daughter, Annie, took over the farm.

DR.H: Yeah. So how it was farmed before Jim Lynch farmed this side of the valley, I don't really know, but Sandy might. He--

TM: So Sandy Lynch is somebody we should talk with about it?

DR.H: Oh, yeah. He had polled Hereford cattle, which I've got a photograph of here. And I don't know, you know, for him it was definitely a hobby. It wasn't, I don't know that he actually made any money. I've no idea. It’s not too likely.

TM: A gentleman farmer.

DR.H: Yeah. Right. So, it's really my daughter has been the first one who's actually lived, made a livelihood out of it, through intense imagination and a lot of work.

TM: And how did she get involved?

DR.H: Well, she was born here. Well, she wasn't born here, she was born in London, but she grew up here. And was very anxious to leave and travel, and forget about it, I think, for a while. But she and her husband decided they wanted to farm and have made a huge success of it.

TM: So at that time, what was the farm?

DR.H: Oh, yes. Well, we always kept a few pigs to--we grew some corn. We grew hay. Tobacco had been grown here by--well, we had 28 acres from Susie's dad, which is slightly separated from this farm here. It's about a five-minute walk away. And they grew tobacco on there for a while. I don't think that there was really a whole lot else.

TM: So what time was it the demonstration farm for Mother Earth?

DR.H: Oh, yes. Okay. So, in the beginning of the eighties we rented about half an acre of land and the cottage to *Mother Earth News*, who in the form of Franklin and Susan Sides came here. She was a writer and photographer and I think he sort of did the work to create gardens that they could photograph.

TM: Oh.

DR.H: That was important. They had to be photogenic for the magazine, that's what I understand. And they did that for several years, until *Mother Earth News* moved. I think that's what happened. And then Mr. Neyland, David Neyland, I let him farm a piece of land. And he had bees and he and I used to take care of bees together.

TM: And is anybody using the land now?

DR.H: Right, my daughter is using all of it.

TM: You don't have any animals?

DR.H: She--no. She sometimes has pigs to fatten up, because they're cheap. It doesn't cost her anything to feed a couple of pigs.

TM: From time to time I've seen sheep here.

DR.H: The sheep are, yes, here a lot of the time, and a friend, Aaron, rents the land for his sheep. And that's very nice. I love having them here.

TM: So now let's think, talk a little bit about down the road there's the graveyard, which is also on your land.

DR.H: Yes.

TM: Do you know anything about that graveyard? Its history, different stories about it?

DR.H: Very little is known about that graveyard that I've been able to gather. There's a gravestone there of a young girl, early 19th century, who died at the age of 16. And nobody seems to know who she was. There's a possibility that slaves are buried there, I understand, but we don't really know, certainly.

TM: There's a sign thereabouts.

DR.H: The sign was put up by a gentleman who told me that his ancestors, his wife's ancestors, were buried there. But that's been difficult to determine, as well.

[Break.]

TM: ...great if you could think back to a typical day, say in the nineties, the eighties or nineties, what was going on, you know, who was here.

DR.H: Well, our marriage was fairly conventional, in the old-fashioned sense that I was the--went out and worked, and Susie stayed here. But what she did here was pretty extraordinary. So, can I show you where the art studio and the pottery, where she did the pottery?

TM: Yeah, we'll put a section on that.

DR.H: Okay. So she had the pottery studio in the carport, basically, with several kilns, several pottery wheels. It was always beautifully, artistically untidy with lots of kids coming in and getting covered in clay and everything. And she taught drawing and painting, as well. This was several waves that--the homeschoolers used to come by for awhile.

And then--this is public record, right? Better not say everything I should say... About that

[Laughing]

DR.H: Anyway--

TM: Say whatever you feel comfortable saying. Or we can erase bits.

DR.H: Susie always used to feel homeschoolers used to stay a long time because they didn't have anything else to do. She was a little cynical. But anyway, they came.

And then she would have an afterschool art program, and that went on for years. Hundreds of children came through that, over time.

And then the other thing that Susie was very keen on was the American Field Service, where she had gone to Japan as a 16-year-old girl. So we always had foreign students here.

And then it was busy, a bit too busy for our kids, I think, sometimes. But they survived fairly well.

So--here she comes--and then Susie grew up with a mother who would be always looking for work for her eight children to do, to keep them busy. And so she was very good at that at occupying kids and giving them stuff to do. They expected it. There was an expectation of coming here that you would work.

TM: So there was--when did Susie retire from doing that?

DR.H: When she got too sick to continue.

TM: And then there was a massive celebration of--

DR.H: Well, we had--some friends gave her a huge party, but the retirement was not voluntary. She just couldn't do it.

[Break.]

TM: So we talked a bit about the house, Will, but let's talk a little bit about your career in medicine here, in Bat Cave you mentioned, and then in Fairview. Maybe run through that and some of the highlights for you and things that you did that you feel were real contributions to medical care and so on.

DR.H: Well, I didn't do anything planning to have a contribution to healthcare. I was an immigrant needing to earn my living. It wasn't that complicated. But I found myself in an interesting situation, I think. A very unusual one, it wasn't what I was looking for. It was, I was invited to run a 15-bed hospital, eight miles from where I was living. And it meant I didn't have to borrow money, I didn't have to worry about financing it. All I had to do was go there and turn up. And I wasn't comfortable that it was a good idea to have a 15-bed hospital 20 miles from a major medical center. It didn't seem to make a lot of sense. In some ways, I don't think it did. But the community wanted it and I hadn't been there more than a few months when women started coming to me, asking me to deliver their babies in a more natural environment than was available, really, anywhere else for miles.

I'm sorry to say, but the situation at Mission Hospital, while technically good, people survived childbirth for the most part, and the babies did. But it wasn't a comfortable situation for a lot of women. They didn't like it. And often they couldn't touch their babies for 24 hours. It just seemed really ridiculous to me.

So when somebody asked me to--the first one asked me to deliver her baby, she had a list of about eight questions, which were very simple, like "Can I hold the baby when it's born?", "Can I feed it right away?" Nothing complicated. And I said, "Yes, that's fine". She burst into tears and I was delivering--I delivered a baby a week for three years, on the average. 150 babies. I counted them up.

I had two very nice obstetricians who I could call for help and we'd do C sections at another hospital about 15 miles away. And I'm relieved to say we lost no mothers and we lost no babies and the outcome was good. I had people coming from as far as Spartanburg to deliver their babies. I never encouraged it. I always told them did they really want to drive around those wild curves in the middle of the night vomiting to have a baby in Bat Cave? I couldn't put them off.

So that was an interesting thing in my life. It didn't go on for long. Fortunately for me. I think I was getting exhausted.

TM: What years would that have been?

DR.H: Would have been 1978 to '81. And within a year of us starting that, what we called 'birthing room' at the hospital, every major hospital in the area created their own birthing room. So I think I might have had a sociological impact on the area. I don't know. I can't say, but it seemed to me-- They all knew what was going on. They didn't all like it, the obstetricians. I got some, a little bit of flak from that. Nothing much. Anyway, so that was one thing.

I had practiced in England several years before I came here and was very comfortable with being—visits to people's homes. So, I got a reputation for that, although I'm certain I wasn't the only person in the area doing home visits. I had a--recruited a staff to work with me who all stayed

except for one, for a lot many years. I didn't lose any of my staff. We worked together well and I think people enjoyed the environment. But I can't say more than that. My mode of practice was pretty conventional, I think, on the whole.

TM: So did you move your practice?

DR.H: Well, yes.

TM: Out of the hospital?

DR.H: Moved out of the hospital for I believe it was a year or two, I did see patients in my house part time, four afternoons a week. And a lot of people I see remind me of the fact that they came to see me here, over the years, so I, you know, it was probably more people than I realize, looking back.

And then I was able to purchase a small building in the middle of Fairview, which is now owned by some people who have a business counseling emergency rooms. They've been successful. And I sold some of the land to the library, Fairview Library.

TM: So that practice was right near where the library now is.

DR.H: Right next to it. And I'd like to add that during the course of this time, John Wander joined me in practice and I think we had a very amicable relationship. We worked very well together.

And then later on, we joined with another practice on Gashes Creek Road, near I-40. Built a big building.

[Break.]

TM: So you mentioned that now, from time to time, you meet old patients. Are there any particular recollections that were brought back to you by meeting your old patients?

DR.H: [Laughing] Yeah, many. About five years ago I ran into a young man. I was out jogging and he was standing beside the road. And he looked at me with a big grin and he said, "Doc, do you remember me?" And of course I didn't have any idea who he was. He said, "Do you remember me coming to your house with somebody in the middle of the night and you stitched us up?" And I said, "Yes, I do remember that. I don't remember the details".

He said, "Well," he said, "me and my friend, we had been up to this pretty girl, out the cove, and we were just getting there when her father chased us off with a shotgun. And we went through two barbed wire fences and a huge bunch of brambles to get away, terrified. And we came down to your house and you said, 'You know, I don't think I can do a whole lot about all these cuts, but I'll do my best, if you want me to'." And I did and they did and they seemed happy. I couldn't see any scars on his face.

So, yeah, I had lots of little stories like that.

TM: What about on a winter night when you had to travel over to Bat Cave Hospital?

DR.H: Yes. When the hospital was still open, and it was only open for a very short time. Three years, I think, with me there at the helm. It was before--it was just before coronary artery bypass surgery and major cardiac surgery and even catheterization. It was just coming in, but it wasn't much. And so, a lot of people would get into a cardiac situation and the cardiologist couldn't help them anymore, and some of them would come down to Bat Cave and we were kind of hospice, and they would pass away down there, in a sort of friendly place.

So one night, the moon was out, the roads were completely covered in ice and the phone rang and I was at that point, yes, living about eight miles

from the hospital at the wrong end of an extremely windy road, quite dangerous, really. And my car wouldn't drive--the phone went and the nurse said--she was a little bit less secure than some of the nurses who were down there, and she said, "Please come down. This patient is dying and the family wants you to come".

So I tried to put her off because I knew there wasn't anything I could do and I didn't want to get out of bed. But she begged, the nurse begged. So down I went. I tried to get down there and got into my car and it wouldn't move on the ice, at all. So then I thought, well, okay, I'll just call down there and tell them that I can't get there. And she said, "Oh, it's okay. I will send the Sheriff to come and pick you up".

TM: To come all the way here to pick you up?

DR.H: No, I had to walk up the mountain and wait at the top for the Sheriff to come. And it was okay. By the time I started walking, it was so beautiful with the icicles and the moon was out. It was gorgeous. I didn't mind. I was happy to be there. And I got to the top and I heard this distant roar of obviously a pretty powerful motor coming up the hill. And I saw this huge truck, tractor-trailer coming up. Because one side of the hill there was no ice, and my side there was ice. And the demarcation was absolute on the Continental Divide, which it often is. The weather is very different on the two sides.

So I was terrified seeing this truck coming up the hill full speed. And I jumped--ran into the road and waved and tried to get it to stop but they took no notice of me and went over the top. And then I heard this terrible crashing noise. And I thought, this is terrible, you know, what am I going to see? So I walked over the top of the hill and the truck was upright,

fortunately, spread across the road, with tires in each ditch, on both sides, stuck there.

So I thought, well, I'd better go down and see what's going on. And the guy was pretty irritated, I'd have to stay. And I didn't say anything about "Why didn't you stop?", of course, but there was a huge banging noise coming out of this truck. I thought, oh, goodness, what's he got, kind of cargo that's sliding off shelves and what could it be?

He had 40 thoroughbred racehorses. Well, horses, anyway. In his truck. And they were traveling at 2 o'clock in the morning. I thought, wow, this is interesting. And anyway, so he started getting the horses out and I said, "Don't worry, the Sheriff's meeting me at the top of the mountain".

And I wasn't sure whether he was pleased about that or not. But anyway, so, I went back up the hill and then another car, a smaller car, came racing up the hill, too. Well, they didn't stop either, and whizzed over the top and I thought, oh, dear, they're going to hit the truck and hit a horse or something. And four men got out, which I thought was kind of interesting, at 2 o'clock in the morning. And I said, "Don't worry, the Sheriff is on the way".

And once again, I don't know how pleased they were. But anyway, I went back up the hill. And then a young lady came by in a car and she had the sense to stop and then somebody else came by and he said, oh, he was going to go home. By that time, the local factories were operating and people were on their way to work. And eventually the Sheriff turned up. He seemed a little reluctant to call Buncombe County. It was a different county he was in. But, anyway, I persuaded him to call while I listened to him, and he took me down to the hospital.

The guy who had a bad heart left the earth at that point and the family had gone home. So I had a nice breakfast and eventually hitched a ride back up the hill with another tractor-trailer, who were on the way to pick up the horses. So when I got to the top of the hill, half the inhabitants of Gerton were out drinking coffee and standing around in the trees and sort of watching the horses and generally having a good social time.

TM: So you mentioned a couple of differences in medical practice in those two stories that you just told us, how medicine has changed over the years. You've described how somebody came in the middle of the night to your house and woke you up to get treated. And you described what happened out in Bat Cave and you going away again. In what other ways has medicine changed over the years since you-- Maybe describe what it was like in UK, what it was like here and how it's evolved over the years.

DR.H: Well, for me, the scat form from UK to here wasn't so great. I did, well, I did hospitalize all my patients here, which I hadn't been doing for a few years in England. That added a dimension which was a lot of hard work in time, really, a lot of extra time. That was the main thing with that.

And we abandoned the hospital about 20 years later when we were advised by some consultants that we would make a lot more money if we didn't go to the hospital, if we saw patients in our offices during that time. So I think everybody, on the whole, we were kind of relieved to do that.

You know, I think the other way it has changed, is a way it's changed for all of us physicians over the last 20 to 30 years, has been the amount of paperwork and having to record everything you do and in some ways I think medical records, which are created to fit the system with the use of computers, don't always represent the whole truth in the way we would like to.

TM: So what do you think is missing from those records? What is the whole truth?

DR.H: I think that might be a bit of an exaggeration. To create medical records, we use catch phrases a lot. And these are prefabricated catch phrases that are put into the record to make sure we've covered all the points needed to create a bill that corresponds to the record. I don't think it has to be like that necessarily, but it sometimes feels like it. I think for most of us older doctors it was much more time-consuming, so if somebody came to see me with appendicitis in the old days, all I had to do was write a note in the record just saying "acute appendicitis, refer to surgeon so-and-so", whereas now you have to have about a page and a half of written stuff.

TM: Wow.

[Break.]

TM: So those were really interesting stories and the account of the way that medical care has changed over the years. Before we end, Will, I wondered if you--you mentioned Sandy Lynch. I wonder who else in Fairview would really be able to tell us more about the history of the place, going way back even before when you came here. You don't have to give us the answer to this now, but any that come to mind immediately.

DR.H: You might want to talk to Betty--what's her name? My neighbor--Betty-- The peacocks.

TM: Oh, Cameron.

DR.H: Cameron. That might be a good person to talk to. Well, you know, if you don't mind I'd like to get a pen and paper. Write notes on that.

TM: That would be great. And then while you're doing that, from time to time when we've been driving together, you've looked at a building

and you've said very interesting things about the history of that building. For example, Dickies down in Fairview, you described what Dickies was like when you first came here. Could you give us a flavor of what that was like and then, again, with a pencil and paper write down some other buildings that bring to mind stories or the history of Fairview. So tell us a little bit about what Dickies was.

DR.H: As far as I know, the building is still owned by a family, Van Dotson's relatives still own it. They rent it, I think. It was--

TM: So Van Dotson would be another good person to talk with?

DR.H: Yeah. He doesn't live in Fairview anymore. He lives down in Mills Ri- ... but he wants to come back.

TM: And what was that building when you came?

DR.H: A general store. The guy who ran it, David--what was his name?-- Total character. You know, he was very abrupt but he would know his customers, he would know who they were. And he wouldn't necessarily be completely polite, but he was fun. And he always had a big cigar in his mouth, he'd walk around with it, interact with everybody.

Then he quit doing that. And the bank manager at the First Citizens Bank, which is now an optician's office, one day he changed out of his three-piece suit and put on some overalls and took over the grocery store. I don't think he was very suited. He didn't seem to do that well. He started selling ammunition and fireworks. Seemed to be a step down. But, you know, I don't know enough of the economics of stores to know for sure about that.

TM: So when was that original handover from the cigar-smoking gentleman to the banker?

DR.H: It's got to be over 20 years ago. Time has got really out of hand with me, trying to remember when things happened, what, and so on.

TM: So if we can talk to you again, this has been great, we can maybe go on a driving tour.

DR.H: Yes.

TM: Even if you can recall what you know--

DR.H: MoJo's?

TM: Yeah.

DR.H: That was Bill's Sandwich Shop for a long time.

TM: MoJo's a way by Mine Hole Gap?

DR.H: Yes. Bill's Sandwich Shop. And he ran that and when my brother-in-law was about 15, he would have to go into Asheville with this guy called Kenneth who worked here on the farm, in a big truck, to pick up Susie. And on the way back, the cleaner would always say, "Doug, you want a tall one?" as they came by the shop. Beer. "You want a tall one?"

TM: So is that the same building as MoJo's was--

DR.H: I think they've--like, people do here, it's incredible how buildings can be readjusted; torn down, built up. The Fairview Restaurant is another one.

TM: So what was that?

DR.H: That was--the people who owned it were called, I think Smiths. And the building was very leaky and so when it rained there were buckets on the floor all around the room to catch the rain.

TM: Wow. This is where Angelo's is now.

DR.H: Yes. But it was popular. Well, then a couple came up here from Florida and bought it and he pretty much knocked the whole building down as he went and rebuilt it with logs and, you know, the roof is fine. But they didn't last very long. They had some unfortunate things happen with them.

And then another couple came in and bought it from them. And when the local carpenters and guys went in to have breakfast, they would all be told to take their boots off. And that was a very poor sales promotion. So it didn't last very long either.

And then Angelo actually came in and rescued it.

TM: And where was Angelo from?

DR.H: He was Greek. I like Angelo and his wife's cute, very nice family. Anyway, that's it.

TM: Great. Well, thank you so much.

[Break.]

TM: So you mentioned the Fairview Grocery was here.

DR.H: Yes.

TM: Where did you do all your shopping?

DR.H: Anything more than that, more than a few local things, we have to go to Bi-Lo's which was down on River Road near the golf course, at that time.

TM: On Swannanoa Drive?

DR.H: Riverside Drive, I think.

TM: Swannanoa River Road.

DR.H: Near Walmart, that area. That was the closest. And then Ingles were next. And then when more construction was going on and the road that was widened, which was a very contentious issue in Fairview, Food Lion was built.

But my wife was so upset with all the new buildings going up that she wouldn't shop there for a long time. So I didn't always want to drive further, so when I shopped there I'd always hide the bags so that she wouldn't see where I'd bought the groceries.

[Laughter.]

TM: So that's humorous but also there was some contention you mentioned and also how the land has been used in Fairview and what planning goes on. Has that ever been a contentious issue-- And if so--

DR.H: The only one I know about was when it was decided to widen 74 into a five-lane highway, and this did cause a lot of concern by some people in Fairview, not all, of course. So I can only speak for some aspects. But as a result of that, town meetings were planned. And these were conducted for awhile but it became too contentious to continue with these town meetings.

TM: Contentious between who?

DR.H: Between the people who wanted to have some type of planning in the expansion of the road and property, and people who just wanted the free-for-all, and basically that actually got so contentious that it went... a whole election of county commissioners hung on it. And the county commissioner, who was interested in the idea, lost his--the idea of planning, lost his seat and so it went with unrestricted development.

TM: So now we see what the changes on 74 happening day by day.

DR.H: Oh, yes. Right. It was a completely, like a country road.

TM: So if you were coming up from Ingles, up Mine Hole Gap, what was that like, coming over there?

DR.H: It would be like these--74 was a single highway.

TM: Going over towards Gerton.

DR.H: Right.

TM: Shall we stop there for the moment and then maybe pick up another time when we get back from our travels?

DR.H: Yeah. Oh yeah.

TM: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW